ARCHON

MANUAL

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MANUAL WRITTEN BY JON FREEMAN AND PAUL REICHE III

ARCHON

THE MANUAL

THE STRATEGY SCREEN

THE GAME. ARCHON depicts the eternal struggle between Light and Darkness as a contest of action and strategy between opposing forces wrought from myth and legend. The Light Side and the Dark Side are equal in number, balanced in strength, but not identical. Their aim, however, is the same: conquest of the five "power points" or the elimination of the opposite side.

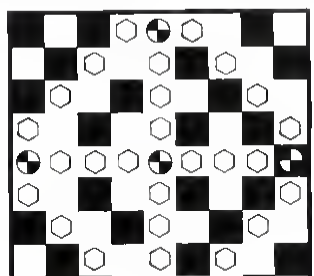
ICONS. The various fantastic creatures at your command are represented by specific images— icons' —stylized pictures of knights, goblins, manticores, and the like.

There are 18 icons—a total of eight different kinds on each side. None of yours are identical to any of the icons on the other side.

THE TWO SCREENS. ARCHON is played on two screens. On one—the strategy screen—you and your opponent take turns maneuvering your icons into favorable positions. When you place an icon on a square already occupied by one of your opponent's icons, the game shifts temporarily to the second display, the combat arena.

HOSTILITIES. In old-fashioned and—admit it—somewhat dull board games (chess, backgammon, and their ilk) the "defending" piece gets removed quietly from the board, and the "attacker" wins the "battle"—and the square—without a blow being struck.

In ARCHON we do not allow such docility, such rank defeatism on the part of the defender. No! If you want that square, you have to fight for it! When you try to occupy a square held by the enemy, the disputed square expands to fill the entire screen, and then, in the words of a certain orange-skinned monster of comic-book fame, "IT'S CLOBBERIN' TIME!!!"



INITIAL STRATEGY SCREEN

THE LUMINOSITY CYCLE. ARCHON's strategy screen changes. While some squares are always white or always black, others— luminance squares (marked In Figure Two)—vary in brightness throughout the game in a simple pattern: black – dark – barely dark – barely light – light – white and reverse. Back and forth throughout the game, the cycle continues. The luminance shifting after every other turn.

Your fortunes in the game tend to ebb and flow with the luminosity cycle. This is because Icons of the Light Side are harder to defeat on light squares than on dark ones. Conversely, Dark Side Icons are stronger on dark squares and weakest on white ones.

POWER POINTS. The five power points' are indicated on the screen by flashing red symbols. Icons on power points heal faster than usual and are protected from the effects of magic spells. If your Icons occupy all five power points, you win the game.

MOVEMENT. If the hollow square or frame is on your side. It's your turn. (Simple, eh?) Use your joystick to move the frame atop the Icon you want. Once you push the button to confirm your choice, you must move that icon somewhere. (If an Icon has nowhere to go, the computer will not allow you to "pick it up.") Once you move the Icon to its destination (again, with the joystick), push the button again, and the obedient image will freeze in place.

Movement comes in three flavors: ground, fly, and teleport. Ground movers cannot move through occupied squares. Fliers are restricted only in where they land. Fliers can also move diagonally; ground Icons cannot. Only the Wizard and the Sorceress can teleport, but for practical purposes you can think of them as fliers in disguise.

On any turn, you can move an Icon as far as its range allows in any direction or combination of directions. It can stop on any square not already occupied by one of your own Icons.

Note: If you change your mind while maneuvering a ground mover you must backtrack. Otherwise the computer, being very literal-minded, will assume you are trying to extend your move unlawfully.

THE COMBAT ARENA

COMBAT. Action in the combat arena is immediate and simultaneous. There is no taking turns. Joysticks direct movement of the icons. Pressing the button initiates an attack—swinging a sword, firing an arrow, casting a fireball—in the direction the joystick is pointed. You can attack or move in any of eight directions: up, down, left, right, and the four diagonals. Important: your icon cannot move while the button is pressed.

Combat is of three general types. Knights and Goblins are sword swingers and club wielders; they must be very near an opponent to inflict damage.

The Banshee and the Phoenix inflict damage in a circular area around themselves; the longer the opposing icon is in that circle, the greater the damage it sustains. Such "area" attacks need not be aimed.

All the other icons "throw" missiles of some sort and can consequently do damage from a considerable distance. See the QUICK REFERENCE CARD for a detailed comparison of the speed ("Attack Speed") of and damage done ("Attack Force") by the different missiles.

THE ATTACK INTERVAL. While combat is fast and furious, you can't just fire away as fast as your finger twitches. It takes a moment to raise a sword into position to strike; longer to conjure even a fast fireball; and the better part of two whole seconds (!) to rip a boulder out of the ground and lift it high enough to throw.

Pushing the button before your icon is ready to strike will accomplish nothing—except to keep your icon from moving. At the exact instant you can launch another attack, the computer rings a bell—a high note for the Light Side, a lower one for the Dark Side—to let you know.

BARRIERS. The obstacles or barriers in the arena go through luminosity cycles of their own. Be careful: they can be as tricky as an opponent!

Normally a barrier is impenetrable. However, when its cycle changes a barrier's luminance to exactly match the color of the background, the barrier disappears — for a few seconds. You can walk over it, shoot past it, anything. It's gone.

Furthermore, for a few seconds before a barrier vanishes and after it reappears, you can walk or fire a missile through it, but you (or the missile) will be slowed down.

If this seems at all confusing, just remember that the more solid a barrier looks, the more solid it is. If you have any doubts, avoid the barriers entirely—and get out of the way of oncoming missiles.

LIFE, DEATH, AND WOUNDS. The "life" nes at either end of the arena indicate the current lifespan (health/strength) of the two battling icons. When an icon is wounded, its matching lifeline is reduced in proportion to the severity of the wound. When its lifeline is gone, the icon is "dead" and combat is over.

A victorious icon returns to the strategy screen in control of the disputed square. However, a seriously wounded icon is easier to defeat the next time it is forced to fight. Even the strongest icon can be worn down by waves of attackers.

On the strategy screen, wounded icons are healed slowly by the simple passage of time; more quickly by resting on a power point; or instantly and completely by a Heal spell.

MAGIC

Magic is arguably the most significant strategic element in **ARCHON**. Only the two mages (magicians)—the Wizard and the Sorceress—can cast spells, and each mage can cast each spell only once. While the spells are powerful, they have one drawback: each spell weakens the mage casting it, leaving that mage progressively less able to defend itself against direct attack.

A spell may be cast instead of a regular move on the strategy screen. Simply move the frame atop your mage as if you were going to move it. Push the button, and the usual message appears. Without moving the icon, however, just push the button again, and you will get a new message: SELECT YOUR SPELL.

Push the joystick up or down to survey the spells still available, and push the button when you find the one you want. If further actions on your part are required, additional messages will direct you appropriately.

Remember that you can't conjure the same spell more than once, and you can't cast a spell against power points or icons on them. Details are given below.

TELEPORT

EFFECT: This spell moves—teleports—any one of your icons any distance from one square on the strategy screen to another.

ACTIONS REQUIRED: After selecting the spell, move the frame to the icon you want; push the button, and then move the icon to its destination—just as if it were a normal move.

RESTRICTIONS: You cannot move an enemy icon. You cannot move onto a square already occupied by one of your own icons (as usual). You cannot teleport onto or off a power point. You cannot teleport an imprisoned icon. (See IMPRISON.)

ADDITIONAL NOTE: Do not confuse this spell with a mage's normal three-square movement. That is minor magic, on the same order as casting fireballs, and is not bound by the restrictions of the seven major spells.

HEAL

EFFECT: This spell instantly heals any icon of all wounds it has sustained in the combat arena.

ACTIONS REQUIRED: After selecting the spell, move the frame to the wounded icon, and push the button.

RESTRICTIONS: You cannot heal an icon resting on a power point. You can "heal" an already healthy icon, but why bother?

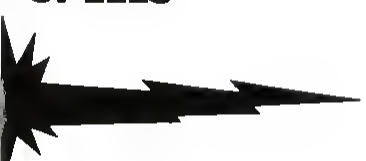
SHIFT TIME

EFFECT: Two effects are possible. Most often, the spell reverses the flow of time; i.e., the direction of the luminosity cycle of the delta squares. Squares that had been growing gradually darker would now grow lighter—until the cycle peaked. However, if the spell is cast when the luminosity cycle is at either peak, Shift Time will cause the cycle to shift abruptly to the opposite extreme (from black to white, or vice versa).

ACTIONS REQUIRED: None after selecting the spell.

RESTRICTIONS: None.

SPELLS



EXCHANGE

EFFECT This spell causes any two icons on the strategy screen to trade places
ACTIONS REQUIRED Move the frame to one of the icons you wish to transpose and push the button Then do the same to the other icon
RESTRICTIONS. Neither icon can be imprisoned or on a power point

SUMMON ELEMENTAL

EFFECT This spell allows you to attack any enemy icon with a new temporary icon representing one of four elemen tals—animated spirits of the ancient elements of earth, air fire, and water Combat is conducted in the combat arena as usual except that the elemental vanishes after the battle win or lose
ACTIONS REQUIRED Once the spell is selected and the elemental appears on your side of the strategy screen, move it to the icon you wish to attack In the combat arena, direct the elemental just as you would any other icon
RESTRICTIONS You cannot attack an icon on a power point You cannot direct the elemental to a vacant square or one occupied by one of your own Icons You cannot choose which elemental will respond to your summons

REVIVE

EFFECT This spell restores to the game an icon previously lost (killed ") in combat
ACTIONS REQUIRED The procedure is similar to a Teleport spell or a normal move, except that the revived Icon comes from a special display by the side of the strategy screen, and its destination must be a vacant square next to the mage
RESTRICTIONS You cannot "revive" an Icon not already dead One of the (initially five) squares adjoining your mage must be vacant, and you must put the revived Icon on one of those vacant squares

IMPRISON

EFFECT This spell keeps an Icon on the strategy screen from leaving its square The Icon can fight its attackers in the combat arena but it cannot be moved off its square Important an imprisoned mage cannot cast spells! Imprisonment is temporary A Dark Side Icon would remain imprisoned until the delta squares turn black, a Light Side Icon would be freed when delta squares turn white
ACTIONS REQUIRED Once the spell is cast move the frame to the target con, and push the button
RESTRICTIONS You cannot imprison an Icon on a power point You cannot imprison any Icon at a time when the luminosity cycle would automatically free it

CEASE CONJURING

This s not a spell It is a way to avoid casting a spell ti you miscalculate If you change your mind while selecting a spell or if the spell you want is unavailable or canceled, you may push the button when CEASE CONJURING Is displayed This will allow you to start your turn over

QUESTIONS

Q: Some of the icons aren't very distinct on my TV and I'm having trouble telling them apart. What can I do?

A: Buy a new Sony TV or better yet, a computer monitor. Seriously. If you must put up with the limited resolution of the average television set, color smudging at certain luminances will make recognition of the icons more difficult. Nonetheless, the icons are quite distinct on most squares, and in a short time they will all be quite distinctive. Indeed, like classmates on the first day of school, despite their initial strangeness, they will soon become so familiar that you'll wonder how you could ever have failed to recognize them instantly.

Q: Why does the frame stay on the screen when I'm moving an icon from one square to another?

A: It marks the icon's original location and serves as a point of reference, especially if you change your mind and have to backtrack.

Q: I'm having trouble moving my Wizard. When I push the button and try to move it, only the frame goes anywhere. I figured I wasn't pushing the button hard enough, so I pushed it again and got the list of spells! What am I doing wrong?

A: Nothing. The Wizard and the Sorceress teleport from one square to another without actually walking over the intervening squares. While it looks different from the movement of other icons, the mechanics are actually the same: just move the frame instead of the icon, and push the button when you get to your destination.

Q: When my friend casts SHIFT TIME, the screen changes immediately. When I do it, it waits a turn before anything happens. Why?

A: You had the first move. All luminance changes take place after the second player's turns. (That's one of the advantages of playing second.)

Q: When there are obstacles toward the bottom of the arena, I have trouble running my icon along the lower wall. (It doesn't always seem to fit.) Sometimes when I try though, instead of bouncing backward, the barriers pop my icon on through to the other side!

A: True. Yup. So what's your question?

Q: What happens if my icon is on top of a "fuzzy" barrier when it turns solid?

A: Your icon will be thrown off the barrier, just as if it had run into the obstacle from the side.

Q: Sometimes when I'm "firing" really fast, I don't hear the "reload" sound. Am I going too fast for the computer to keep up?

A: (Pause for laughter.) No. If you happen to have the button pressed and the joystick already pointed at the end of the attack interval (what some people called the "reload time"), the computer won't bother sounding the bell; instead, it simply launches your attack.

Q: Is it possible for two icons in the combat arena to kill each other? If so, who gets the square?

A: Yes. "double kills" are possible. You can even get killed by a "dead" icon if it has already launched an attack. (Zapping an Archer, for instance, would have no effect on an arrow already in flight.) In such cases, the disputed square on the strategy screen will simply be empty. The same thing happens when an elemental wins a battle.

Q: My attacks often go in the wrong direction, and sometimes I can't seem to fire at all. What's wrong?

A: You're pushing the button while you're still moving your icon. Make sure the joystick is in "neutral" —or at least

& ANSWERS

pointed in the right direction—before you press the trigger. Your "nonexistent" attacks are probably stopped by a wall or barrier right next to you before you can notice them, or else you're simply pressing the trigger before your attack interval is up.

Q: Why does the "pause" key only work in the combat arena, and why only when the computer is playing?

A: The "pause" function exists to keep the computer's icon from killing off yours when something outside the computer's knowledge (like the doorbell) requires your attention. It is unnecessary on the strategy screen because the computer takes only a second or two to move, and you can take an unofficial "time out" as soon as it's your turn. When your opponents are of the human persuasion, you can ask them to stop for a moment. (If they refuse, perhaps you should recruit new opposition.)

Q: My Archer attacked the Dragon on a black square. She got killed, but she did hit it with an arrow, so I know the Dragon was wounded. On my very next turn, I attacked the Dragon again, but it was no longer wounded. Why not?

A: Favorable luminance provides a certain magical enhancement to an icon's lifespan. One of the benefits of this luminance bonus is that "nicks and scratches" (a category into which, under the circumstances, your single arrow wound fell) are not permanent. This bonus is also the reason a badly wounded Icon may make what seems to be a miraculous (if only partial) recovery between battles. On a white square the Dragon would have lacked this benefit, and every minor wound would have remained.

(What were you doing attacking a Dragon on a black square, anyway? What are you, suicidal?)

Q: Why don't Trolls in ARCHON regenerate the way they do in Lizards & Lunkheads? And why can't I find the Phoenix in my L&L Beast Book?

A: Because it isn't there.

Look, folks, despite what the Head Dragon might like you to believe, fantasy was not invented in 1974, and L&L's interpretations of mythological beasts are hardly definitive Role-playing games—L&L Demons & Dimwits, Monsters & Morons, etc.—draw their subject matter (if not their game mechanics) from the same sources we do: 5000 years of myth and legend and a close reading of certain contemporary writers of fantasy and science fiction. If you don't approve of our Trolls' complain to the troll union.

Q: Why can't I make copies of ARCHON for my friends?

A: Someone always asks. One answer is that **ARCHON** disks are copy-protected, but that's begging the question. (And yes, we know copy protection is not perfect, but if you have the time and talent to get around such devices, we'd really rather you worked on games of your own, instead.)

The handful of people at Free Fall Associates would rather develop games than do anything else, but if we don't pay our bills creating games, we'll have to do something less fun for us—and (if you enjoyed **ARCHON** enough to want to copy it) probably less fun for you. Royalties are our only income, and every illegal copy of **ARCHON** represents money we'll never see. Pizzas we won't eat, paperbacks we'll never get to read.

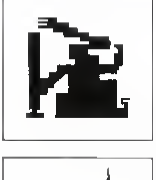
We have the same dreams you do, probably. We'd like to be rich and famous, and this seems to be our only chance. When you come up with an original game or a fancy utility, you'll feel the same way.

Most of the games you see may be rip-offs of arcade games and other designers' ideas, but ours aren't. Our games are original products of our own bizarre imaginations and many months of work. We don't rip off other people, and we don't think we deserve to be ripped off, either.

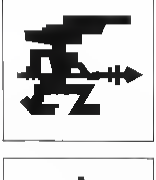
Thanks from Anne, Jon, and Paul.

LIGHT SIDE

THE OPPOSING

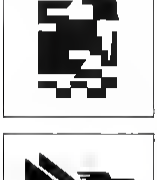


An ancient man of vast supernatural power the WIZARD s the leader of the Light Side In battle the Wizard casts devastating bolts of l re He rarely ventures from the safety of his home powe point however and is more commonly used to cast one of the seven spells. (See MAGIC SPELLS)

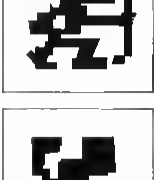


VALKYRIES are beauteous blonde war maidens from the leg ans of Valhalla Each of these ferocious females is endowed with two great magical gifts. first the ability to stride the air as I it were solid ground and second, an enchanted spear which, when thrown, returns to her hand of its own accord

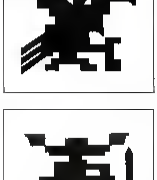
Resembling a great white horse with the tail of a lion and a sharp spiral horn set of its brow the UNICORN is swift and agile The beautiful creature can fire a blinding bolt of energy from its magical horn



The DJINNI is a magical being from another dimension a plane of tempest and storm In form he is a huge superbly muscled man whose body is partly flesh and partly swirling currents of air A cousin to the wind itself the Djinni can raise a small tornado with a gesture and control it with a thought



The ARCHERS are fearless Amazon warriors of legendary skill with their fine whitewood bows They are endowed with magical quivers that can never be emptied.



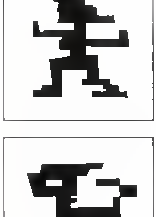
The PHOENIX is a flaming bird of immense size and power In battle it can explode into a seething mass of fire, scorching anyone on the perimeter of the blaze and burning severely any enemy unfortunate enough to be caught near the incandescent core Not only s the Phoenix unscathed by its own flames but while undergoing its fiery meta morphosis it cannot be harmed by any attack known.

A GOLEM is an artificial be ng shaped from stone and g eam ng metal and animated by magic Roughly man-shaped it is huge twice the height of a man Its weapons are boulders ripped from the earth and hurled with devastating force

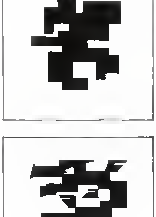
The KNIGHTS are foot soldiers armed and armored age nst foes far larger than themselves. Although they cannot withstand more than one blow from many of their enemies, they need not be mere cannon (or dragon) fodder Provided they are swift and clever their speed of attack gives them a chance to sur vive and triumph

FORCES

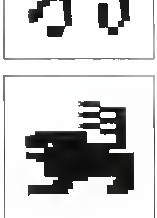
DARK SIDE



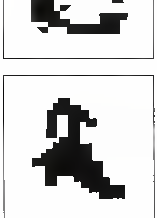
The equal of the old Wizard only in power, the eternally young and ever beautiful SORCERESS is his counter part in all ways. Her lightning bolts are swifter and surer than his fireballs if a shade less potent. Fierce in battle but safest on the black power point she is most often used to cast the seven spells. (See MAGIC SPELLS.)



The SHAPESHIFTER is a doppelgänger a demonic creature without true shape or form save what it steals from its enemies. In battle it becomes the mirror image of its opponent strongest on squares where its enemy is weakest turning the enemy's powers against itself. It has no fixed lifespan - all wounds that do not prove fatal will heal as soon as it assumes a new form.



The BASILISK is a small crested reptile with the scaly body of a lizard and the bulbous glowing eyes of a gargoyle. Although it is relatively short lived, the beast's quick movements and deadly glance make it a terrifying opponent.



The DRAGON, a monstrous serpentine reptile, is without peer in the combat arena. One gout of its flaming breath will kill many creatures and a second blast is almost always fatal. Highly mobile and very difficult to slay, its awesome powers make it second in value only to the Sorceress.

The MANTICORE resembles a large golden lion with a human face and a scorpion's thorny tail. This nasty appendage bristles with great quills like spikes which the fell beast can fling over its head with surprising accuracy.

The BANSHEE is an undead spirit that feeds off the souls of her opponents, a ghastly apparition that attacks with her keening wail, draining the life from anyone in range of the sound (the shaded area around her). Prolonged exposure to the terrifying shriek can be fatal.

A dweller in caves and dark places, the misshapen TROLL is a shambling giant, dull but strong, clumsy but hard to slay. Like the Golem, it can use no ready-made weapons, instead it seizes boulders, tree trunks—whatever comes to hand—and catapults the massive objects at its enemies.

GOBLINS are hideous dwarves twisted of limb and misshapen of feature, unfriendly and often violent. Their mutual antagonism is kept in check only by the powers of the Sorceress. On stark ground their gnarled clubs are more than a match for the swords of the Knights, and if well-directed they can bring down the most potent of enemies.

PLAYING HINTS

STRATEGY SCREEN: OPENINGS

CONSERVATIVE OPENING This involves moving your unfavorably located Icons onto more favorable squares (white squares for Light Icons, black squares for Dark Icons). The idea is to establish a strong, balanced position early on. Since the corner Icons (the Valkyrie/Banshee) are mobile and especially vulnerable to magical attack (via the Summon Elemental or Teleport spells), these are often the first to be moved. Being a ground mover, the Unicorn/Banshee will be stuck on the "wrong" square until you clear an escape route, either directly by moving the Knight/Goblin in front of it or indirectly and more slowly, by moving other Knights/Goblins and then adjacent Icons in the back rank.

MAGICAL ASSAULT ("BIG JUJU" OR "MAJOR MANA OPENING) The aim here is to wipe out the strongest enemy Icon right off the bat, before it can do any harm. This is most easily done with a combination of spells: Imprison, Summon Elemental, Teleport, and, if needed, Reverse Time. The first spell holds the victim immobile while you attack with an elemental and then one of your strongest Icons, teleported across the board. Shift Time may be used to prevent the imprisoned Icon from getting away before you can finish it off.

MONSTER ROMP This is risky but fun and sometimes surprisingly effective. Just fly or teleport one of your strongest Icons (the Djinn/Dragon or Phoenix/Shapeshifter) to the other side of the board, and take it on a romp in stompin' four of all the occupied squares unfavorable to the Icons stuck on them. This procedure tends to throw new players into a panic, which is always helpful. More experienced players will either imprison the attacker or counter with a monster romp of their own. Rapid attrition on both sides follows such a counterattack.

STRATEGY SCREEN: GENERAL HINTS

STAY ON YOUR COLOR! The effect of a square's luminance on the life of your Icons is large—often as much as 50%. Attack on unfavorable squares only if you have an overwhelming superiority over the defending Icon.

PLAN AHEAD Most successful attacks require more than one move to execute. Before taking a square, consider what you will do afterwards. What Icon will continue the assault if the first attacker dies?

AVOID TRAFFIC JAMS. Make openings in your front line for ground-movers to pass. The greater your force's mobility, the greater its flexibility and strength.

PROTECT YOUR MAGE! The Wizard/Sorceress may be a tough hombre in the combat arena, but doom is nigh should you lose your mage early in the game. Since power points are immune to magic spells, it is a wise idea to keep your Wizard/Sorceress "at home."

STRATEGY SCREEN: SPELLS

TELEPORT This spell is handy for tossing a slow or unfavorably placed Icon into your opponent's back rank to raise a ruckus. Alternatively, you can teleport a wounded Icon out of danger.

HEAL. Never heal the Shapeshifter! Since it regenerates completely between battles, the spell would be wasted.

SHIFT TIME Use this spell to prolong an imprisonment by reversing the flow of time before the luminance cycle peaks, freeing the enemy Icon. Conversely, especially if you are playing second, you can free your own imprisoned Icon early by casting the spell at the opposing luminosity peak: in that case, the cycle will jump to your peak, and your Icon will be freed. A more strategic use of the spell could allow you to make a concerted attack on the power points—and possibly win the game—by keeping the luminance favorable.

EXCHANGE. An enemy advance can be frustrated temporarily by exchanging a menacing intruder (e.g., an approaching Dragon/Djinni) in your territory with a weaker Icon (a Goblin/Knight) from your opponent's rear ranks.

SUMMON ELEMENTAL. Since elementals are neutral beings unaffected by changes in luminance, they are well suited to attacking an annoying enemy Icon that remains on squares favorable to it. The spell is also dangereux against mages that venture from their home power points.

REVIVE Revive only strong Icons. Also, avoid placing a revived Icon on an unfavorable square, or it may die again immediately.

IMPRISON The real trick with this spell is timing, coupled with Shift Time. If necessary to prolong the effect, imprison a threatening intruder to blunt an attack, or immobilize a strong Icon on a delta square, then attack when the luminosity cycle is most favorable.

& TIPS ON STRATEGY

COMBAT ARENA: GENERAL HINTS

DON T MOVE IN STRAIGHT LINES Monsters are tricky you should be, too. Dodge and weave. Don t become predictable.

HIT AND RUN. Don't just l re a shot and then sit there waiting for a retaliatory strike. Take your finger off the button immediately after fi ng and boogie on out of there! If you hit something, it can probably hit you.

USE DIAGONAL SHOTS! Although difficult to master, 45° angle shots will improve your performance dramatically. Few players manage consistent diagonals.

TRAP YOUR OPPONENT IN A CORNER. This is especially helpful for sloggers with slow, easily dodged missiles and for the poor infighters (Knights/Goblins).

FEINT! Trick your opponent into attacking by moving into the line of fire momentarily. Then in the interval before the enemy icon can attack again, close in and loose your own attack.

CONFUSE YOUR OPPONENT. When at close range, dodge back and forth to keep from being nailed. This is especially important when you cannot afford an exchange of blows and is vital for a Knight/Goblin.

KNOW YOUR ICON'S STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES. Different icons require different tactics—sometimes radically different—and the nature of your immediate enemy should also affect your course of action.

COMBAT ARENA: THE ICONS

WIZARD. Avoid using the Wizard in combat unless attacked. In a fight, approach to mid range but no closer. Stay in the open. Ireballs are easily stopped by barriers.

SORCERESS. Avoid combat if possible! The speed of her lightning bolts makes the Sorceress effective at long range. Play defens vely and use the barriers to trap an enemy long enough to zap it!

UNICORN/BASILISK. Speed and distance are their prime weapons. Never close, especially if the opponent is in the open. Try to use lines of barriers as alleys for fire.

ARCHER. The Archer's arrows are not fast, so she must get to ry close to ensure a hit. Slower targets, of course, allow greater range.

GOLEM/TROLL. The advantages of these slow-moving creatures are their long lives and deadly attacks. (Those boulders hurt!) Since the rocks travel slowly, the Golem/Troll must get close to the enemy. Be aggressive!

DJINNI/DRAGON. You have power to spare here, so be brazen in attack. Avoid the possible entanglements of cluttered terrain when fighting an icon with a fast attack.

VALKYRIE. The Valkyrie is basically a tougher Archer with a more damaging but slower-moving attack. Use similar tactics.

PHOENIX. Get close—the closer the better. Trap fast foes in corners. Avoid firing alleys, and use the explosive attack defensively when necessary to keep from being hit. Never sit still when vulnerable.

SHAPESHIFTER. The success of this icon is solely dependent on the proper battleground. Avo d white squares like the plague! Ignore the Knights. (Why take a chance on getting killed for so small a prize?) Attack strong icons on black or dark squares.

MANTICORE. This beast has the advantage of a broader attack than its counterparts, especially on diagonals. Be bold against weak opponents, but remain at mid range when fighting more dangerous adversaries.

BANSHEE. The Banshee requires—and rewards—great skill; she is worth the extra effort needed. Stay out of firing lines until the moment of attack, then come in from the side where the area of effect is greatest. Release the joystick button immediately after press ng. I, and follow the opponent closely to prolong the exposure to the scream. Avoid the Golem (sometimes known as "the Banshee curse").

KNIGHT/GOBLIN. Where these infighters are concerned, he who hesitates . . . is dog food. Move quickly but emotionally. Get in close and stay there! Dodge back and forth or circle your enemy to avoid return fire and fluster your opponent. Never stand still and attack constantly. In a Knight-Goblin conflict, use feints and stop thrusts. Accept an exchange of blows only if you have a signif cant luminosity advantage.

ELEMENTALS. The four elementals are quite different from one another. The Earth elemental should be played like a Golem/Troll, which it greatly resembles. Of the other three, Fire has the fastest and most damaging attack, and Water the longest lifespan. Tactically you can think of Fire as a Wizard, Air as an Archer, and Water as a Manticore. Regardless of which elemental you have, however, be aggressive!!! Remember that its wounds don't matter since it will not outlast the battle, anyway.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Designer Paul Reiche III (pronounced RICH-ee, which he'd like to be) o young man of 22. Is no newcomer to games. While still in high school, he and two friends formed Fantasy Art Enterprises to publish o pair of role-playing supplements, The Necromicon and Booty and the Beasts. A meeting with Jon prompted the creation of The Keys of Acheron, a sequel to Jon's Hellfire Warrior, and some graphics design for other ASI games. Publication of his Dungeons & Dragons module, Temple of Poseidon, led to a stint at TSR, publishers of D&D. There, in the frozen wastes of Wisconsin (wh ch may be redundant), he developed Vampyre (a Dracula game), Legion of Gold (a Gamma World module), and new rules for D&D.

Programmer Anne Westfall is older than Paul. She was raising two children, managing a ranch, and growing wine grapes in the great Sonoma wine region, when she decided she needed more of a challenge. Returning to school, she discovered computers at the age of thirty, and her life was never the same. At Morton Technologies, where she helped establish their software division, Disco-Tech, she spent two years designing, developing, and programming Survey 80, an integrated package of three elaborate technical programs for surveyors and subdivision planners. After being enticed (by extracurricular considerations, one suspects) by Jon into joining Automated Simulations, she entered the world of game programming, albeit in BASIC.

Designer Jon Freeman is also older than Paul. A co-founder of Automated Simulations, Jon was responsible for the design and development of most of that company's games, including two award-winners, Temple of Apshai (for which he designed the Dungeonquest system) and Star Warrior. His writing credits include The PLAYBOY Winner's Guide to Board Games, The Complete Book of Wargames, a dozen game manuals (including his favorite, Crush, Crumble and Chomp!), and various stories and articles.

Sharing a mutual dissatisfaction with the company's direction, Jon and Anne (who were by then sharing a house and a preposterous collection of books, records, tea, and wine) led the heg ra from ASI in December, 1981, to form Free Fall Associates, an independent game development firm. After learning the ins and outs of the Atari computer and teaching herself assembler language, Anne and Jon collaborated on Tax Dodge, a thematically unique, technically superior adult maze game that owed nothing to a certain widely imitated eating game. To stay gainfully employed, and to provide a reasonable work ng environment, the current Free Fall offices boast a pleasant lake view, copies of every consumer electronics magazine known to man, and an impressive array of electronic gear.

Paul has been accused of being a tall, blond alien, but he insists he comes from a cattle-ranching family in Nebraska. He adm ts to liking large American cars, w nd up toys, and punk rock. Aside from this he seems as normal as any other Berkeley resident.

In her currently nonexistent spare time, Anne enjoys bird-watching, river rafting, and hiking, as well as classical music.

An ardent libertarian, Jon enjoys (ll that s the proper term) a number of odd distinct ons, including the authorship of one of the most obscure science-fiction novels ever published, an appearance on two of the least known TV programs in the Western world, and a role in what must surely have been the lowest budget karate movie ever made.

Paul is single but taking applications. Jon and Anne are married and intend to stay that way. While they are both native Californians, all three have lived elsewhere, and no one is eager to repeat the experience. The three share a common interest in science fiction and fantasy, dinosaurs, martial arts, games of all sorts, and free-lancing.

ELECTRONIC ARTS

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